VOL 10 No 11 NOVEMBER 1980

SURVEY of Current Affairs

Government and Administration

New Opposition Leader 311

Northern Ireland: Government Statement on Hunger Strike 311

External Affairs and Defence

European Community 314

Berlin 316

Cambodia 316

UNESCO: Communication Questions 317

Shorter Notes 320

US Presidential Election; UN Weaponry Conference; Greece and NATO

Economic and Scientific Affairs

Economic Policy 322

British Construction Overseas 325

Shorter Notes 328

British Shipbuilders; British National Oil Corporation; Nobel Prize for Chemistry; Information Technology

Social and Cultural Affairs

Examinations for 16- to 18-year-olds 330

Shorter Notes 330

Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest

Documentation

331

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GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

New Opposition Leader

Mr Michael Foot was elected as the new leader of the Labour Party on 10 November after two ballots by Labour members of Parliament. In the final ballot Mr Foot received a majority of 10 votes over Mr Denis Healey. The present arrangements for electing the leader of the party are under examination; new rules are expected to be approved at a special party conference to be held in January 1981.

Election Procedure

It was agreed at the annual party conference in October that the present election procedure under which the leader is chosen by the Labour members of the House of Commons should be changed in order to extend the franchise to include trade unions and constituency parties. A special conference open to all those who normally attend the annual conference (that is, members of Parliament and constituency and trade union representatives) is to be convened in mid-January 1981 to consider the appropriate method for extending the franchise.

Under the present rules a possible total of 268 Labour members (and the present Speaker) are entitled to vote. The successful candidate is the one who receives an overall majority of the votes cast, and successive ballots are held until this occurs. If, after the first ballot, no candidate has an overall majority, the candidate with the lowest vote drops out (or the two or three lowest-placed candidates if their combined votes amount to less than those of the candidate above them). After the first ballot, other candidates may also withdraw if they wish, but no new candidate may be nominated.

Results

Four candidates stood for the first ballot which was held on 4 November. They were: Mr Michael Foot (Deputy Leader of the Labour Party), Mr Denis Healey (Opposition spokesman on Treasury and economic affairs); Mr Peter Shore (Opposition spokesman on foreign and Commonwealth affairs); and Mr John Silkin (Opposition spokesman on industry). The result of the first ballot was as follows:

Mr Healey	112
Mr Foot	83
Mr Silkin	38
Mr Shore	32

Under the rules Mr Silkin and Mr Shore were eliminated from the contest.

A second and final ballot took place between Mr Foot and Mr Healey. The result, announced on 10 November, was:

Mr Foot	139
Mr Healey	129

The Speaker did not return his vote.

On 13 November Mr Healey was elected unopposed as deputy leader of the party.

Northern Ireland: Government Statement on Hunger Strike

In a statement on the hunger strike in the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland the Government has set out its position on the demand for 'political status' by the protesting prisoners and outlined the background to their protest.

The Demand for 'Political Status'

Seven prisoners in the Maze Prison began a hunger strike on 27 October. Three of them are serving sentences for murder; one for attempted murder and firearms and explosives offences; one for attempted wounding, robbery and firearms offences; one for firearms and explosives offences; and one for robbery. The hunger strike is said to be in demand for 'political status'.

In a statement issued by the Northern Ireland Office in Belfast on 24 October, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Humphrey Atkins, said: 'The demand for "political status" requires the Government to concede the principle that those who have killed and wounded and destroyed property for what they claim are "political" motives are not culpable in the way that murderers, arsonists and other violent men and women are ordinarily regarded as culpable by society.

'The Government will not and cannot make any concessions whatever on the principle of political status for prisoners who claim a political motive for their crimes. All have been convicted of criminal acts by due process of law. The European Commission of Human Rights has found as recently as June this year in its ruling on an

application by four prisoners in Maze Prison that the right to a preferential status for a certain category of prisoners is not amongst the rights guaranteed by the Convention, and has observed that the prisoners who took their complaints to it are not entitled to the status of political prisoner under national law, or under the Convention, or under the existing norms of international law.'

Background to the Protest

Mr Atkins went on to say that in 1972 the Government was faced with civil disorder on a very large scale in Northern Ireland. Prisoners convicted at that time were accommodated under a regime which was and remained different from that in prisons generally. [In 1972 the classification of 'special category status' was introduced for certain prisoners whose offences were related to the civil disturbances.] In 1975 a Committee of Inquiry under Lord Gardiner recommended that the earliest practicable opportunity should be taken to phase out this category. Prisoners sentenced for crimes committed after 1 March 1976 had accordingly all been treated the same way. On 26 March 1980 the Government announced that this would also apply to any prisoners charged after 1 April 1980 for crimes whenever committed.

Since 1976 a number of prisoners had been engaged in a growing campaign of non-co-operation against the prison authorities. This campaign was in support of demands that they be permitted to wear their own clothes, to refrain from prison work and to associate together as they felt inclined, as well as enjoying normal remission of sentence and whatever privileges were given to the rest of the prison population. The total number of prisoners involved had remained fairly constant at about 350 out of a total convicted prison population of about 2,000 though the individuals involved had not always been the same. The protesters first refused to work or wear prison clothing. For the past two and a half years they had also refused to wash or use the toilet facilities, smearing their cells with excrement and food. It was by their own decision that the protesting prisoners continued to live in conditions which must be offensive to all civilised people.

The Government had taken the following actions but with little or no response from these prisoners.

1 On 26 March 1980 the protesting prisoners, who by their failure to conform with prison rules had forfeited the privileges afforded to other prisoners, were nevertheless offered exercise in sports gear, three letters in and out each month in addition to their statutory monthly letter, and two visits a month instead of one.

2 Since the late summer the protesting prisoners had been offered an hour's physical exercise a week; one evening association a week in prison uniform; access to books and newpapers (which were available in the cell blocks but not taken) in the rooms where masses were held on Sundays; 'closed' visits (that is, in which the prisoner is physically separated from his visitor) as an alternative to a body search; compassionate home leave in certain circumstances on the same basis as conforming prisoners.

3 The cells were steam-cleaned by prison staff every few days and repainted regularly.

4 The protesting prisoners had never been denied their daily hour's exercise nor had they ever been denied access to toilets.

The statement points out that since the protest started 19 prison officers have been murdered by criminals outside the prison claiming to act in support of the prisoners' protest.

Conditions In Northern Ireland Prisons

Mr Atkins said that the Government was anxious to ensure that conditions for all prisoners in Nothern Ireland prisons were enlightened and humane. Modern prisons, including the H-blocks (so-called because of their shape – eight blocks each with 100 cells have been constructed at the Maze Prison), had been built with facilities as good as any in the world. Indeed the May Committee of Inquiry into the United Kingdom Prison Services (see pp 350–1, 1979) acknowledged that the prison accommodation in Northern Ireland was probably the best in the United Kingdom. So far as the prison regime is concerned, prisoners conforming with its rules were allowed three hours of 'association' each evening during which they might meet and talk, watch television, read or pursue leisure activities. At the weekends, there was in addition leisure time at intervals during the morning and afternoon. Prisoners were required to work but 'work' for this purpose included an opportunity for vocational training as well as orderly duties and occupation in prison industry. These arrangements compared favourably with prison regimes elsewhere. There could not be one regime for those who claimed a political motive for their crimes and another for those who did not. All aspects of prisoners' living and working conditions within a common regime would, however, continue to be kept under review, guided by a humane and responsive approach. In this context the Government had been considering for some time the requirement to wear prison uniform in Northern Ireland. Prisoners conforming with the rules could at present as a privilege wear their own clothing, subject to approval by the prison authorities, for visits and at evening and weekend association. Prison uniform was issued for use at other times. The Government had decided to abolish this prison uniform as such, and to substitute civilian-type clothing.

Conforming prisoners would also still retain the privilege of keeping their own clothing for recreation and visits. This change would be introduced over the coming months as quickly as the necessary arrangements could be completed and it would apply to all male prisoners throughout the Northern Ireland prison service.

Government's Attitude to Hunger Strikes

The Government's position on hunger strikes in prison generally was made clear in 1974 and had not changed, Mr Atkins said. Where a prisoner

refused nourishment and was considered by a medical officer as capable of forming an unimpaired and rational judgment concerning the consequences of such a voluntary refusal, he or she should not be fed artificially. The prisoner's capacity to form such a judgment would be confirmed by another independent consultant. The prisoner would then be plainly and categorically warned that the consequent and inevitable deterioration in his health might be allowed to continue without medical intervention unless he specifically requested it. If therefore prisoners chose to try to starve themselves to death they might well die.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

European Community

In October Community foreign ministers approved two regulations designed to give effect to the May 1980 agreement on Britain's contribution to the Community budget. European Commission figures on the latest grants to Britain from the Community's Social and Regional Development Funds were published in September and October. The Government's views on a directive providing for the exchange of driving licences when people move from one member state to live in another were set out in the House of Commons on 4 November.

BRITAIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY BUDGET

On 7 October the Foreign Affairs Council reached agreement on two draft regulations concerning the budget refunds for Britain agreed by the Council in May 1980 (see pp 182–3). One provides for a relaxation of the 1976 financial mechanism and the other for supplementary measures in favour of Britain. Details were given to the House of Commons on 27 October by the Lord Privy Seal, Sir Ian Gilmour (*Hansard,* Vol 991, No 232, written answers, cols 96–100).

Amendment of 1976 Financial Mechanism

Under the first regulation any excess in Britain's share of gross budgetary contributions over its share of Community gross domestic product (currently about 18 per cent) will be fully refunded. The regulation will apply only to Britain and will suspend conditions which had considerably reduced the refunds payable or had eliminated them entirely. It will cover 1980 and 1981 with an extension to 1982 if the Council of Ministers decides that such a solution is required for that year.

Supplementary Measures

The difference between British receipts under the amended financial mechanism and the level of receipts guaranteed by the Council agreement of 30 May will be made up by financial contributions paid from the Community budget in respect of certain categories of public sector investment programmes in Britain, principally in the regions. These will include programmes concerning energy supply, transport and communications, telecommunications, water supply and sewerage, industrial sites, advance factories and housing, and urban renewal where these are part of economic development programmes. Community contributions to investments in the energy sector will not affect current national policy on energy pricing or result in any direct subsidy to price or operating costs.

The Council also agreed on procedures for consultation with other member states on the choice of programmes for support and on the amount to be contributed by the Community. Britain will invite the Community to participate in the financing of eligible investments, broken down by region and investment category, and the European Commission will then make proposals on the choice of programmes and the amount of support. The rate of Community support, taken together with funds from other Community sources, will not exceed 70 per cent. The Commission's proposals are to be considered by an *ad hoc* committee of member states, chaired by a Commission representative, and will be adopted unless a qualified majority (at present 41 out of 58 votes) of the member states vote for rejection.[1] In that event the Commission will refer the matter to the Council of Ministers within a month. The Commission's proposals will, however, prevail unless the Council reaches a different decision by a similar qualified majority within two months. This procedure is similar to that of the European Regional Development Fund regulation.

Britain expects the Community to reallocate funds to other investments if programmes do not conform with the provisions of the regulation or depart substantially from plan. This procedure will also apply in cases where actual expenditure falls short of planned levels, thus causing a substantial change in the implied rate of Community support, and in particular in cases where the maximum rate of 70 per cent will be exceeded.

Supplementary measures will relate in the first instance to Britain's net contributions in respect of the 1980 and 1981 Community budgets. For 1982 the Commission will make proposals along the lines of the 1980 and 1981 solution, if agreement is not reached on structural changes in Community policies and the budget designed to prevent the recurrence of unacceptable situations for individual member countries.

[1]For the purposes of voting, Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Italy each have ten votes, Belgium and the Netherlands have five each, Denmark and the Irish Republic have three each and Luxembourg has two.

Amounts

On the refund from the Community Britain expects net payments of £710 million in 1980 and £860 million in 1981. Since, under Community conventions, Britain has to contribute towards the financing of the refunds, the Government expects a gross payment of £870 million for 1980 – £280 million under the amended financial mechanism and £590 million under the supplementary measures scheme. On the former Britain expects to receive 75 per cent of its gross entitlement for 1980 by January 1981, and not less than 80 per cent of its minimum gross entitlement under the latter by 31 March 1981. (A portion of the amount due under supplementary measures will be made as an advance payment before the end of 1980.) Britain also expects the balance due to it in respect of 1980 to be paid by the autumn of 1981. Similar arrangements will apply to payments due for 1981.

SOCIAL FUND

According to figures published by the European Commission in October, the cumulative total of grants to Britain from the European Social Fund since 1973 is over £537·4 million; this includes two allocations of £63·5 million and £71·9 million for 1980. Priority in the allocation of grants in Britain is given to Northern Ireland, Scotland, Northern England and North West England. The Fund helps workers in regions of the Community where unemployment is particularly serious. Grants are given for training and retraining required as a result of technical progress; to help workers affected by changes in particular industries which lead to altered labour needs; and to rehabilitate and train disabled people to enable them to compete in the labour market. It also assists in the training and retraining of particular groups of workers such as young people under 25 looking for their first job, women over the age of 25 who are unemployed or seeking a return to work after having a family, migrant workers moving between member states or from third countries, or people leaving agriculture or the textile industry.

In order to be eligible for assistance from the Fund a training scheme must have financial support from a public authority. For schemes run by public authorities up to half the cost of the project may be met by the Fund, while for schemes run by private organisations it may match any public authority support.

REGIONAL FUND

An allocation of £29 million to Britain from the European Regional Development Fund was announced by the European Commission in September, bringing the total for 1980 so far to £145 million; since the Fund began operating in 1975 a total of £558 million has been allocated to Britain. About two-thirds of grants are made towards the cost of infrastructure projects in the regions and are passed by the Government to the local and other public authorities concerned. The remainder is spent on industry, including the development of tourism; the Fund can contribute up to half the cost of the assistance given to an individual project by the British Government but Fund industrial grants are retained by the Government to offset the costs of national regional aids paid to these projects. Practically all grants go to projects in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Yorkshire and Humberside, and Northern, North West and South West England. Projects aided include factory building, road and harbour construction, hotel building, and modernisation of water and sewerage services.

DRIVING LICENCES

Government support for a draft directive on the exchange of national driving licences in the Community was expressed by the Minister of Transport, Mr Norman Fowler, in the House of Commons on 4 November (*Hansard*, Vol 991, No 237, cols 1201–8). The intention of the directive is that from 1983 residents moving from one member state to another should be able within a period of 12 months to change their old licence for a licence of their new country of residence without having to take another driving test. It is also proposed that from 1986 national driving licences should be issued in a common format throughout the Community. Special conditions will apply to the exchange of heavy goods and large passenger vehicle licences.

Successive British Governments, Mr Fowler said, had agreed that 'a true Community-wide system of driver licensing [could] be achieved only against a background of uniform and mutually agreed standards for health, driving examiners and driving tests'. However, such harmonised conditions were not yet present, for different national testing and driver licensing systems had developed over the years. (In Britain, for example, the car driving test placed emphasis on a practical test of ability, while several European countries had more theoretical tests.) As a result no member state was ready for a Community-wide licence, and such a change could only come on the basis of a 'general raising of testing and licensing standards, and certainly not simply by settling for the lowest common denominator'. Hence the limited nature of the draft directive.

Turning to the licences for heavy goods and large passenger vehicles, Mr Fowler said that Britain's concern had been to secure the exchange of these licences under much more stringent conditions. As a result of the negotiations, Britain would not be required to grant automatic exchange of heavy lorry and large passenger vehicle licences 'where the licence to be exchanged was obtained through a test which was not the equivalent of [Britain's] either in standard or in the type of vehicle'. With respect to the small number of cases where heavy goods vehicle drivers had passed tests on smaller vehicles than they had subsequently driven, Britain recognised that it would be unreasonable to refuse to exchange such licences if it could be established that drivers had had experience of driving the larger vehicles. The British licensing authority would therefore expect 'at least six months' safe

driving experience within the previous 18 months, or 12 months' in the previous three years', and would be able to check with the authority in Europe which had issued the previous licence. If the authority in Britain was not satisfied the driver would have to take the British test in the normal way. Mr Fowler said that the negotiations on the draft directive had enabled Britain to preserve its well-tried heavy vehicle driver testing and licensing system which had 'substantially reduced road accidents involving heavy vehicles'.

Berlin

The British Government has reaffirmed its commitment, which it shares with its French and United States allies, to maintain the freedom and security of Berlin. Speaking in West Berlin on 31 October, the Lord Privy Seal, Sir Ian Gilmour, said that since the end of the second world war Berlin's security, and hence the liberties of its people, had rested on the continuing exercise of the rights and responsibilities of the Allied Powers. Britain was determined to maintain these rights and responsibilities throughout the city.

The Quadripartite Agreement of 1971 (see pp 425-6, 1971) and the related inner-German agreements (see pp 14-15, 1972), Sir Ian explained, had created the basis for a calmer and more orderly and prosperous existence for Berlin, and this had to be preserved. The British Government expected the strict observance and full implementation of these agreements by all parties concerned and regretted all departures from them. Contact between Germans in the east and west of Berlin, as between those in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, was one of the most welcome benefits to have flowed from the situation created by the Quadripartite Agreement. Accordingly, Britain particularly deplored the new minimum exchange requirement imposed by the German Democratic Republic for visits to that country and to the eastern part of Berlin.[1] This imposition would weigh heavily on Berliners, particularly pensioners, and those with young families, and was clearly inconsistent with the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.[2] However, while these policies were a setback, they did not invalidate the policies pursued by the West. For many years the Federal Republic had sought to develop closer relations with the East in the interests of peace and for the benefit of all. The British Government had consistently supported this policy, and welcomed its many practical achievements. For its part, it saw no alternative to a policy, based on observance of all the agreements governing Berlin's special status, which sought to allow the city to play a full and active role in international life.

Referring to the European Community and its role as an instrument for the promotion of European unity, Sir Ian said that nowhere could this ideal be more fittingly evoked than in Berlin. Britain wanted to see Berlin involved, to the maximum extent compatible with allied rights and responsibilities, in the process of developing and strengthening the Community. It subscribed to the declaration annexed to the Treaty of Rome in which the Community's original six members had confirmed their solidarity with the people of Berlin and their intention to work within the Community for measures to promote the city's development and ensure its economic stability.

[1]On 9 October the German Democratic Republic announced an increase, with effect from 13 October, in the amount of currency visitors from 'non-socialist' countries would have to exchange daily during their stay in the country and in East Berlin.

[2]A review meeting of the progress made in implementing the provisions of the Final Act (see pp 307-12, 1975) opened in Madrid on 11 November.

Cambodia

The British Government has welcomed the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a resolution calling for an international conference to meet in early 1981 to find a comprehensive political settlement to the Cambodian problem.

Adopted on 22 October by 97 votes to 23 with 22 abstentions, the resolution states that the conference, which would be attended by all the conflicting parties and others concerned, would discuss, among other things, the total withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia, arrangements for United Nations supervised elections, and the provision of guarantees against the future introduction of any foreign forces into the country. It also provides for the General Assembly to call for the stationing of a UN observer team on the Thai side of the Thai-Cambodian border as well as the establishment of UN supervised safe areas in western Cambodia for uprooted Cambodian civilians.

British Views

Addressing the General Assembly on 16 October, Britain's permanent representative to the United Nations, Sir Anthony Parsons, emphasised that a comprehensive political solution was essential, 'both to restore to the people of Cambodia the right to live in peace and prosperity under a government of their own choosing, and to remove a major threat to the stability and prosperity of South East Asia as a whole'. It should 'be based on an independent and neutral Cambodia with a genuinely representative government free from any foreign military presence and maintaining friendly relations with all the countries of the region'. In Britain's view, such a government would not emerge from the kind of election being contemplated by 'the Vietnamese installed regime in Phnom Penh' (see pp 19-20), for it appeared that in this there would be 'no choice, no possibility of impartial monitoring, and no conceivable doubt as to the pre-ordained outcome'. This 'would be a travesty of the fair and free elections

which ought . . . to follow a ceasefire and an interval during which all Cambodian groups [would] be able to present their policies to the people without outside pressures'.

The British Government had no views as to what government should emerge from free elections, since this was a matter for the people of Cambodia. At the same time, Sir Anthony stressed, it held no brief for the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge regime whose human rights violations Britain had consistently condemned between 1975 and 1978. In 1978 the British Government had directed the attention of the UN Human Rights Commission to these violations, but British efforts to persuade the international community to investigate the regime's atrocities had been 'strenuously opposed by the Soviet and other pro-Vietnamese delegates' in discussions that year at the Commission's sub-Committee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. It was only after the 1979 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia that these countries had become 'eloquent in condemning the appalling crimes perpetrated by that odious regime'. However, the Pol Pot regime's record was no justification for a foreign invasion and occupation, and Sir Anthony called on the Vietnamese Government to do something towards restoring its position in the international community by withdrawing its troops and allowing Cambodians freedom to control their own destiny without foreign intervention. He hoped that it would reconsider its opposition to a conference, for the sooner a conference could be convened the sooner the Cambodian people would enjoy the peace they longed for. Britain considered it particularly important that Vietnamese troops should be completely withdrawn, and would support the effort that would be needed both to ensure law and order when hostilities had ceased, and to ensure that the withdrawal was actually being carried out.

Referring to the vote in the credentials committee on 11 October, which had resulted in the Pol Pot regime's continuing to represent Cambodia at the United Nations, Sir Anthony explained that Britain did not, never had, and never would support or approve of the regime's policies. Faced with a choice between the Pol Pot regime and the Vietnamese invader Britain's natural reaction was to say 'a plague on both your houses'. Unfortunately, an empty seat solution was not only unacceptable on grounds of principal and precedent, but also because nature abhorred a vacuum in politics as well as in physics. The other 73 countries who voted like Britain, most of whom shared Britain's loathing for the Pol Pot regime, 'evidently took the same view'.

UNESCO: Communication Questions

Communication questions were among the subjects discussed at the 21st General Conference of the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) held in Belgrade from 23 September to 28 October 1980. Britain opposed measures which in its view could have the effect of eventually sanctioning the use of the communications media as an instrument of government policy and limiting the free flow of information.

Main issues and resolutions

Communication questions at the Conference centred on two main issues:

1 A proposal to establish an International Programme for Communications Development under UNESCO auspices. This arose from developing countries' demands for a 'new world information and communication order', reflecting their feeling that present imbalances against them in communication resources should be adjusted.

2 The report of the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems (known as the MacBride Report after the Commission's chairman, Mr Sean MacBride), which makes a series of recommendations covering the whole field of national and international communication.

The debate on communication focused on four resolutions:

1 A resolution calling for a study with a view to defining the principles of a new world information and communication order. Britain voted against this resolution, together with Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland. Countries voting in favour numbered 51, and 27 abstained.

2 A resolution on follow-up to the 1978 UNESCO Declaration on the Mass Media (see p 432, 1978). Countries voting in favour of this resolution sponsored by the Soviet Union numbered 68; those opposed one. Britain was one of 27 countries which abstained.

3 A resolution establishing the International Programme for Communication Development following the recommendations of a UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference in Paris in April 1980. This was adopted by consensus.

4 A resolution on the MacBride Report. This was adopted by consensus, but Britain, which sees the Report's general thrust as suggesting that imbalances in communication should be corrected by increased state intervention, expressed serious reservations in an explanation of vote (see below).

BRITISH VIEWS

Minister of State's Speech

Addressing the Conference on 30 September, Mr Peter Blaker, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, dealt at some length with communication questions.

Communication, he said, was a particularly important subject for UNESCO. Technological advance, including the 'microchip revolution', would shortly transform the possibilities for communications between nations and within them. For the present there was increasing awareness both of the importance of communication and of the unequal capabilities of member states in this field. The British Government had no doubt as to the importance of communication, and favoured

all reasonable efforts to encourage and increase the full flow of accurate information within and between countries. Communication was, however, an expensive activity. Poor countries with comparatively low levels of literacy found it particularly difficult both to develop adequate means of internal communication and to receive news of the outside world, and they might sometimes feel that 'the news of their own activities that [reached] the outside world [was] biased and filtered through unsympathetic spectacles'.

The MacBride Report

The MacBride Report, Mr Blaker said, had contributed to the debate on communication and information issues by drawing together much previously dispersed material. However, it was not, and was never intended to be, a definitive work. Noting that the Commission had felt itself unable to propose a global strategy for a new international and communication order, Mr Blaker said that the British Government questioned very much whether any such grand strategy and definition was necessary or practical. In its view, the only new world order that made sense was one which improved significantly existing arrangements. Communication was not susceptible to imposed uniformity or international regulations. Diversity had to be maintained. Britain had very serious reservations regarding many of the MacBride Report's recommendations, and was pleased therefore, that, in his paper before the Conference, the UNESCO Director-General was not seeking a general endorsement of the Report. In addition to the 'often regrettably obscure' language of the Report, Britain could not accept the overall impression left by the recommendations, namely 'that the evident imbalances in the field of communications should be corrected by increased state intervention, or by international directive'. Further, this 'centralist' approach was mirrored by 'a negative even pejorative approach' towards many of the communication structures established in the developed market economies. Often it seemed to have been assumed that commercial considerations would inevitably produce adverse consequences in the media, though this assumption was made with scant evidence and without any corresponding effort to ascertain if this method of operation might in fact have positive advantages. Nor was this counter-balanced by any similar considerations of the adverse efforts of state control of the media.

Differing Views of Communication

Mr Blaker then contrasted the two basic conceptions of the role of communication. In one, communication and information were seen simply as an instrument of power, as the prerogative of the state and wholly subservient to the political, social and cultural policies of the government concerned. The government, therefore, prohibited or excluded all information which it felt its citizens should not know. In this context, Mr Blaker pointed to the jamming by the Soviet authorities of the BBC's Russian service and other western broadcasts during the recent developments in Poland. This action was not only in clear contravention of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which required its signatories 'to make it their aim to facilitate a freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds', but also of the articles of the International Telecommunications Union. It was inconsistent, too, with UNESCO's own principles, notably those enshrined in its constitution: 'The unrestricted pursuit of objective truth and . . . the free exchange of ideas and knowledge'.

The other view, and the one to which Britain was committed, was that 'the freedom of opinion, the freedom to seek and exchange ideas and information, are fundamental human rights, and in a democracy cannot be eroded'. Britain, Mr Blaker emphasised, could not 'be party to any resolutions or programmes which would seek to derogate from these rights, or which in practice would impair them'.

While the freedom to criticise could sometimes be disagreeable to governments, it was 'an essential element in the proper functioning of a democracy'. Similarly, while everyone deplored the trivialisation and distortion that occurred in the press, whether free or controlled, this was not an area for legislation. Improvements in media could only be achieved through the exercise of self-discipline and responsibility by those in the media and the existence of a well-informed and critical audience. For an organisation such as UNESCO it was of fundamental importance to ensure that there was the widest possible contact and flow of information, not only between governments or journalists, but also between scientists, artists, educationists and ordinary citizens of every country.

Nor could the British Government accept that it should be a function of UNESCO to devote its energies to the development of universally imposed international standards in the field of communication – for instance in regard to the protection of journalists. In this respect Mr Blaker made two points: first that if basic human rights were assured for all there would be no need for special protection for journalists; and secondly that Britain fully endorsed the recommendation of the MacBride Report which emphasised the dangers of special status for journalists.

UNESCO's Communication Role

As already indicated, Mr Blaker continued, Britain recognised that imbalances existed in the capacity of countries, and also of groups of individuals within countries, to communicate, and it shared the common aspiration to see these gaps reduced. However, the remedy lay not in the regulation or restriction of existing flows, but in the development of greater capacities to communicate. Mutual understanding was advanced by more not less communication. Nothing, for instance, was so effective in ensuring 'balance' as providing the audience with many sources of information, and the freedom to discuss this information and to choose for itself. Therein lay UNESCO's role. It should not become the stage for the propagation of one single view of communication: it had to be concerned to develop greater capacities and leave aside the political and ideological rhetoric which had distinguished much of the communication

debate so far. Perhaps there had been enough studies, and enough meetings to discuss them, to provide all members with sufficient food for thought. What UNESCO should now do was to consider how it might make a contribution to the practical issues involved.

In particular, it should concern itself with the training of journalists and broadcasters, concentrating on the development of practical skills. Training through courses, seminars or workshops in developing countries could be supplemented by exchanges for experienced professionals. UNESCO could also act as a clearing house, to help assess and register training needs and match them to existing resources. The proper choice, introduction and application of the new technologies was another important area where UNESCO could help. At the same time, it should not neglect the many aspects of communication besides the news media – for example, in education or explaining development plans. The adoption by consensus in April by the Inter-governmental Conference on Communication Development of a recommendation for a new international programme for communication development presented UNESCO with the opportunity to make such contributions to these practical issues. The British Government hoped that a spirit of goodwill would characterise the further consideration of this programme so that it might proceed in an efficient and business-like manner. It had been clear at the April conference, and this was echoed in the MacBride Report, that there was a need for a consultative mechanism which would make easier the co-ordination of communication aid. Britain hoped that the new programme would fulfil this objective.

The MacBride Report, and the documents laid before the April Conference, had drawn attention to the relatively small amounts of development assistance allocated to communication. Since most multilateral and bilateral aid was allocated largely in response to the wishes of the recipient countries, this seemed to indicate not a need for another channel of funds, but rather a re-assessment, both nationally and internationally, of the priority accorded to communication; and also to priorities within the communication sector itself. This had to be one of the first tasks of any new international programme.

British Aid

Britain had a long and continuing record of substantial assistance to the communications sector from both government and private sources, and was willing to continue this. Such assistance had ranged widely, and had included, for example, major telecommunication programmes such as the third Nepal telecommunications project which Britain was financing with the World Bank, and the improvement of the telecommunications system in India and a number of other Asian countries by the laying of a submarine cable across the Indian Ocean from Madras to Penang in Malaysia. Britain had also undertaken many specific training schemes and the exchange of personnel. This flexible approach had the very considerable advantage that it enabled Britain to respond to the particular needs and circumstances of individual countries. The British Government did not try to impose upon them an artificial uniform pattern. The approach emphasised self-reliance, and enabled the communication sector to be integrated fully into national development plans. In addition, much valuable work had been done and continued to be done by professional associations and non-governmental organisations. This form of co-operation was of the utmost importance and was of direct benefit to the developing countries. Mr Blaker repeated Britain's view that the immensely important contribution made by the developed countries from non-governmental sources had been seriously neglected in the discussions in UNESCO and in the MacBride Report. The British public and private sectors stood ready to share their expertise and to assist where they could with the development of communications.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr Blaker stressed that in the communication sector, as in other UNESCO programmes, it was necessary to focus on defined areas where UNESCO could make a positive contribution and thereby achieve something worthwhile. It was important for members not to dissipate their energies in ideological confrontation – perhaps by trying to reopen the debate on the mass media declaration. What was needed was to elicit the support of those best able to help and whose goodwill and co-operation were needed if one of UNESCO's main purposes was to be advanced – namely, the spread of understanding and truth.

Britain and the MacBride Report Resolution

It was with great reluctance, a British representative told the conference on 24 October, that Britain had joined the consensus on the resolution on the MacBride Report, and it would not have supported it in a vote. With regard to the part of the resolution which dealt with the follow-up to the Report, Britain could see no need for the proposed international meeting of experts to formulate proposals for the establishment of a new world information and communication order; nor for the suggested further studies of communication problems. As for the proposal that the Director-General, in implementing UNESCO's programme for 1981 to 1983, should give great consideration to the Report's recommendations which could be implemented quickly, the British Government hoped that he would take the views of the member states closely into account in doing so.

However, it was the part of the resolution which purported to lay down a number of basic considerations on which the new world order could be based which caused Britain most concern. This exercise, the representative stated, had no place in the resolution which should have confined itself to the Director-General's paper on the findings of the MacBride Report, and in which he had pointed out that the Commission had been unable to propose a global strategy to achieve this. The Director-General had also pointed out that there was no need for firm decisions at this stage, and a resolution (proposed by Venezuela)

had been adopted inviting him to undertake a study to draw up the basic principles of the new order. Britain could see no reason to pre-empt this process by last-minute attempts to define matters which demanded the most careful thought and study. It was precisely because it attached so much importance to communications and thought that a new order had to bring genuine and specific improvements that it believed that attempts to define basic principles should not be undertaken hastily. Many of the points listed were equivocal, insufficient and inadequate. In particular no list of guiding considerations could omit such fundamental principles as the right to freedom of thought, opinion and expression; the free circulation of information and ideas; the freedom of movement; freedom from censorship and arbitrary government control; and access to sources of information, unofficial as well as official. Instead of asserting these principles clearly, the list contained too many negative formulations, and concentrated too much on the rights or responsibilities of countries, of governments, and not enough on the rights of individuals. It also contained a number of items whose meaning or intent laid the basis for the introduction of extraneous political ideology into communication questions.

In a radio interview on 28 October, Mr Blaker specified two main reasons why Britain objected to the resolution. First, such resolutions, he believed, were helping to build up false resentments in the developing world. They seemed to assume that the developed world was not prepared to help developing countries to improve their media organisations, when in fact developed countries, including Britain, had already given a good deal of help, and more was available if wanted. The second reason was that they emphasised action by governments rather than action by private enterprises. This was bad, because it could be used by authoritarian regimes to justify more government action and more action against private media organisations. In Britain's view, there should be a balance between government and private activities, and the more media there were the better since that offered people a wider choice of information.

Summing up, Mr Blaker said that Britain thought it was desirable that developing countries should have more media, but it was undesirable to move in the direction of destroying a free press or the very good media organisations which already existed. It would be a great mistake to risk destroying them.

Shorter Notes

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Following Mr Ronald Reagan's election on 4 November as the next President of the United States,[1] Britain's Prime Minister sent him the following message: 'May I send you my warmest congratulations, and those of my colleagues in the British Government, on your victory in the presidential election. Remembering our meeting in London in 1978, I look forward to working closely with you and with your colleagues in your new administration. You will be assuming the presidency at a time when the close friendship between our two countries can, I believe, play a crucial role in strengthening co-operation within the Alliance. I look forward to an early opportunity of discussing with you the urgent problems which we all face. I hope you already know that you will receive the warmest welcome from both the Government and the people of this country when you can find an opportunity to visit Britain which I hope will be soon.'

[1]With some 51 per cent of the votes cast Mr Reagan, a former Governor of California, won 489 of the 538 electoral college votes. President Jimmy Carter received about 41 per cent of the popular vote and 49 electoral college votes. Mr John Anderson obtained some 7 per cent of the vote but no electoral college votes.

UN WEAPONRY CONFERENCE

Meeting in Geneva from 15 September to 10 October, and attended by representatives from some 70 countries, the United Nations Conference on Excessively Injurious Conventional Weapons (also known as the UN Weaponry Conference) approved the text of a general convention establishing a legal framework for prohibitions and restrictions on the use of such weapons in armed conflicts. It also agreed on three protocols to the convention designed to restrict the use of mines and booby-traps and of incendiary weapons and to prohibit the use of weapons which cause injury by fragments not detectable by X-ray. The convention will open for signature in April 1981 and will come into force after ratification by 20 states.

The British Government has welcomed the outcome of the conference. Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, told the House of Commons on 28 October (*Hansard*, Vol 991, No 233, col 237), that the agreement reached there had 'genuine humanitarian value' and contained the first restrictions on the use of conventional weapons adopted internationally for over 70 years. The mines protocol, he added, was largely based on a British draft proposal, while the convention itself was based on a draft elaborated jointly by the British and the Netherlands delegations.

The first session of the conference had met in September 1979, taking up work on the question of 'inhuman' conventional weapons (that is, those considered to cause unnecessary suffering or to be indiscriminate in their effects) begun in an *ad hoc* committee of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts which had met from 1974 to 1977. The earlier origins of this work lie in the conventions of the nineteenth century banning the use of explosive and dum-dum bullets, and the Geneva protocol of 1925 banning the use in war of poison gas and bacteriological weapons.

GREECE AND NATO

Greece re-entered the integrated military structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)

on 20 October, a proposal for this, developed by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Bernard W. Rogers, and acceptable to both Greece and Turkey, being approved that day by NATO's Defence Planning Committee. Greece had withdrawn from the integrated military structure in August 1974 following Turkey's invasion of Cyprus (see pp 305-9, 1974).

The British Government has welcomed this development. During a visit to Greece in September, Britain's Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, had emphasised that all NATO members wanted Greece to return to the military structure as soon as possible, this being 'essential both for Greece's sake and for the rest of us in the Alliance'.

ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

Economic Policy

The Government's commitment to its economic policies for the defeat of inflation has been affirmed by both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister in recent speeches to City audiences. The Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, stressed that control of the money supply was essential to economic stability and that the Government's determination to achieve its medium-term goals remained unaltered although policies would be adjusted as necessary to achieve these objectives. Mrs Thatcher said that counter-inflation policy was succeeding and must be continued. She went on to point out the need for containment of the cost of the public sector, particularly pay.

CHANCELLOR'S MANSION HOUSE SPEECH

The fundamental responsibility of government to protect the value of money was a major point in the speech given by the Chancellor to the Lord Mayor's Banquet for Bankers and Merchants of the City of London at the Mansion House on 16 October. He also said that the burdens of counter-inflation policy must be evenly distributed, being borne by those in the public sector as well as those in the private sector. The goal of the economic adjustment through which Britain was going was more, even, than price stability: it was 'an expanding, innovative, wealth-creating economy'.

Money Supply

'History has ... taught us', Sir Geoffrey said, 'that government cannot responsibly ignore its fundamental duty to protect the value of money.' Particularly since the collapse of the fixed-parity international monetary system in the 1970s there had been wide agreement that governments had to maintain firm control of the money supply if they were to combat inflation and lay a foundation for sustainable growth. 'The importance of monetary policy is not confined to periods of crisis. Control of the money supply is essential to economic stability and prosperity, year in, year out. It is not one of a number of alternative policies, to be assumed or discarded according to the fashion – but a necessity of economic life. The fact that it is uncertain or difficult is emphatically no ground for ignoring it.'

It was for this reason, the Chancellor explained, that the Government's monetary policy was not limited to the short term. The financial strategy published with the March Budget (see p 113) firmly committed the Government to falling monetary growth over a period of years. 'That strategy is not called into question by short-term difficulties in measuring and controlling the money supply. Our determination to achieve our medium-term goals remains unaltered.' Policies would be adjusted as necessary in order to achieve the Government's objectives.

The Government did not flinch from good decisions because they were difficult, Sir Geoffrey maintained, and he reminded his audience of the sharp reduction in top tax rates (see pp 196-7, 1979), the abolition of controls on dividends (see p 196, 1979), prices (see pp 340-1, 1979) and pay, and the removal of exchange controls (see p 162) and the supplementary special deposits scheme (the 'corset', see p 131). However, he continued, 'We are not a reckless administration. Our philosophy has been to proceed step by step, with all deliberate speed.' It was in this spirit, the Chancellor said, that the Government had consulted widely on whether its techniques of monetary control could be improved in ways that would help it achieve its medium-term strategy. The public examination of possible improvements, launched with the publication in March of the consultative document *Monetary Control* (see pp 131-2), would soon be brought to a conclusion. Although he could not pre-judge that conclusion the Chancellor felt that some things were already becoming clear. For example, direct controls, including the corset, had a very limited value in a sophisticated financial system, such as existed in Britain, and could cause more problems than they cured. He pointed out that the authorities had felt impelled to re-impose the corset on no fewer than three occasions, which suggested that present arrangements might not be adequate, even over the medium term, for the fulfilment of a policy which rested upon the priority of meeting monetary targets and reducing the rate of monetary growth. 'It is not surprising that many of our financial institutions have yet to adapt to a world in which quantitative monetary targets are accorded their due importance. If indeed present arrangements are not entirely adequate, then the questions which arise need to be considered and answered in a careful sequence. We shall announce the outcome of our current considerations as soon as we are ready to do so.'

Turning to recent trends in the money supply, Sir Geoffrey said that the figures for the banking months July and August were clearly distorted,[1] not only by the 'bill leak' and other forms of disintermediation[2] but also by the banks as they took advantage of the freedom denied them for two years by the corset. As he had explained in September, the underlying rate of monetary growth was too high, because of the financial needs of companies and the pattern of the public sector borrowing requirement, but the position was likely to improve. Detailed figures for the banking month September, published that day, revealed a low growth of sterling M3 (a rise of 0·6 per cent).[3] Public borrowing and bank lending were likely to abate in the second half of the financial year, contributing to a lower trend in the growth of the money supply, taking one month with another.

Inflation

The Government was making progress in reducing the rate of inflation, Sir Geoffrey went on, although it was still much too high. The annual rate of retail price inflation was about six percentage points lower than in May and the Chancellor expected a further considerable fall by the spring. Wholesale prices and house prices were hardly rising at all and in each of the previous four months the increase in retail prices had been well below 1 per cent.

Sir Geoffrey admitted that defeating inflation involved adjustment costs which, although in the long run were 'plainly less than the costs of surrendering to inflation', were nevertheless substantial. He pointed out that the more quickly those responsible for taking economic decisions – above all, those responsible for wage bargaining – adapted to the tightness of monetary policy, the smaller the adjustment costs would be. 'This is why', he continued, 'it is so important to strengthen people's growing confidence that inflation is, indeed, going to slow down; and to make people understand that past inflation is a most dangerous yardstick for judging the size of present pay settlements.'

For this reason the Government attached great importance to the opportunities for dialogue, for example, at the National Economic Development Council. Discussions there had gained in quality and breadth as the result of the inclusion of the Governor of the Bank of England. The Government was at all times ready to discuss its policies as well as the factors by which those policies were inevitably constrained, for such factors must limit all its actions. It was doubtless because of this, Sir Geoffrey continued, that signs of greater realism were increasingly apparent in, for instance, some recent wage settlements in the engineering and motor industries. 'It may not be too much to hope that the autumn of understanding has already begun.'

North Sea Oil and the Exchange Rate

The Chancellor pointed to an aspect of Britain's affairs which needed to be better understood. 'We are having to beat down inflation at the same time as world markets have been depressed by the oil-induced recession. And, to cap it all, here in Britain we face the simultaneous need to make long-term changes in our economy – in response to our North Sea oil and gas, and the high exchange rate which they bring in their wake.

'No wonder people still find it less than easy to see North Sea oil in the right perspective. For some, it is an unqualified blessing; for others, an unmitigated disaster. Both judgments are exaggerated.' There was a variety of ways in which North Sea oil helped Britain. It brought some security of oil supply, significant additional revenue in due course, and, to the extent that it had been reflected in a higher exchange rate, some help in the fight against inflation and an (unearned) addition to the standard of living. However, the impact of oil on the exchange rate had created real and pressing problems for Britain's exporters and for those firms facing competition from overseas in home markets. Also, because of the substantial improvement brought by oil to real living standards, it tended 'to reduce the pressures we feel to mend our ways. In that respect, alas, it is capable of making the British disease significantly worse.'

The Chancellor maintained that the changes in resource allocation required by increased oil production were 'no different in quality from the normal changes in any dynamic and complex economy', but that the pace of change was disconcerting. The recent strength of the pound was bringing home to Britain with the same disconcerting speed the inevitable consequences of allowing pay to rise much more quickly and productivity much more slowly than in its competitors. He said: 'The days in which it seemed easy to accommodate such failings through depreciation of the pound are now over. Nor do we have the option of managing the exchange rate at some desired level.' The current level of the exchange rate was determined by the market and had not been sought as a matter of deliberate policy. Some factors underlying the present strength of sterling, such as high interest rates, were likely to be temporary. Outflows of capital from the private sector were growing and, particularly when sterling interest rates fell, could well accelerate, as could overseas borrowing in the sterling market. 'As for the current account of our balance of payments', Sir Geoffrey went on, 'I think we must regard yesterday's exceptional figures as in part the result of the impact of recession on imports, and not as something we expect month after month on this scale.'[1]

[1]In these two months sterling M3 (money in circulation and British residents' sterling bank deposits) rose by 5 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively.

[2]The corset had encouraged banks to move lending into uncontrolled channels and a large quantity of commercial bills 'leaked' to the non-bank sector. The return of business within the measured money supply, following the removal of the corset, artificially inflated sterling M3.

[3]However, figures for the banking month October, published on 13 November, indicated a rise in sterling M3 of 2 per cent.

[1]Sir Geoffrey was referring to the surplus on current account in September of £444 million, then the largest ever recorded in a single month. This was followed by an even larger surplus in October, when the level of imports was again depressed by the recession.

Public Expenditure

At a time when industry faced adjustments of the kind he had described, the Chancellor went on, it was all the more important to ensure that the burdens of the Government's counter-inflation policy were fairly distributed. 'If we are to be able to permit reduction in interest rates without endangering monetary control, then we must secure firm control of public spending and borrowing.'

Sir Geoffrey said that for too long it had been assumed that decisions on public spending could be taken without any attempt to match the cash to be spent against the cash that could reasonably be raised. For this reason the Government had attached importance to controlling the cash cost of public expenditure by means of cash limits and had reacted firmly and quickly to the recent threats of overspending by local government (see p 298) and by the Ministry of Defence.[1]

'At a time of general economic difficulty, the public sector cannot be protected from pain', the Chancellor warned, adding that this applied with particular force to public sector pay. As workers in the competitive sectors were being obliged to accept pay rises substantially below the current rate of inflation it would be grossly unfair if employees in the public sector were not prepared to do the same.

Sir Geoffrey drew attention to the unusually large increase in earnings which, partly as a result of staged 'comparability' payments (see p 62, 1979), many public sector workers had enjoyed during the last pay round: the average increase for the public services was about 27 per cent compared with 18 per cent in manufacturing industry. Moreover, most of those in the public sector had enjoyed a much higher standard of job security. He said that when unemployment was high a secure job was worth a great deal and 'that should be reflected in relative levels of pay'. These factors would be firmly in the Government's mind when cash limits were to be set for rate support grant[2] as well as for central government expenditure.

The Nationalised Industries

The Chancellor said that the monopoly position of the nationalised industries spared many of them the pains of adjustment now falling on the private sector. The fact that not all these industries faced the same pressures to control pay and other costs as did firms which had to compete in the market sometimes resulted in 'inexcusably poor standards of service' or, more often, perhaps, in price increases which created 'severe problems for their customers'. Of course, price increases were not always their fault. Some were brought about by the rise in oil prices in 1979 and others because subsidies had grown too large. 'But all too often', he said, 'nationalised industry prices have risen too far because their pay has risen faster than the average of the private sector.' Sir Geoffrey had a clear message for the nationalised industries, management and unions: 'The country looks to you to help with the process of economic adjustment by cutting back the growth of your costs.' Meanwhile, the Government would continue to do everything it sensibly could to diminish the monopoly power of the nationalised industries, in some by ending statutory monopolies and allowing private enterprise to compete, and in others by transferring the control of all or part of their activities to the private sector.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Chancellor told his audience that government could best help the process of extending the role of the market and so improving the working of the economy by creating the right investment climate, which meant, above all, defeating inflation. 'The chief creative impetus has to come', he said, 'from those directly involved in market activities. If they lack enterprise and initiative the Government cannot make good the deficiency. A great deal depends on you in your role as intermediary, adviser or shareholder. The City has never lacked imagination and forethought in the past. There will be still greater opportunities to display these talents in the future.'

The ultimate goal was 'an expanding, innovative, wealth-creating economy in which individuals can enjoy the rewards of their own efforts, in which society can afford improving social services, in which the decay of our cities can be reversed by the energy and prosperity of those who live and work in them.

'Of course, the processes of economic change will not be easy. So let us take care never to forget what "economic adjustment" can mean in terms of everyday human life: for small, perhaps new, businesses whose horizons are, for the moment, deeply clouded; for the sick and the old, whose standards literally depend upon the success or failure of the rest of society; for those, perhaps above all, who are now without work and whose next job is far out of sight.

'Now perhaps it is time to recall the words of Queen Elizabeth the First when she restored the coinage in 1561. It would, she remarked, involve temporary discomfort, "not much unlike to them, that being sick receive a medicine, and in the taking feel some bitterness, but yet thereby recover health and strength, and save their lives".

'Upon the basis of shared objectives and common understanding, we can likewise restore the health of our society. We must make it our business to see that we do.'

PUBLIC SECTOR PAY

In her speech on 10 November at the Lord Mayor's Banquet at Guildhall, the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, stressed the importance of pay discipline, especially in the public sector. She said that manufacturing industry was 'having to adjust faster than ever before to changed economic conditions'. These were in part caused

[1] In a parliamentary reply on 8 August (*Hansard*, Vol 990, No 230, Part II, written answers, col 480), the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Francis Pym, announced a three-month moratorium on new defence contracts (save for a few essential exceptions).

[2] About half the current expenditure of local authorities is financed out of rate support grants from central government.

by high pay settlements, particularly in the last two pay rounds.

Government could not 'significantly influence the pace' at which industry had to adjust except by putting at risk the conquest of inflation. 'And that we must not do', Mrs Thatcher emphasised, 'for there is no way of rebuilding a healthy industry or a high level of employment except on the basis of a stable currency. Our policies to reduce inflation are succeeding and they must be continued.' However, the Government could 'make it easier for industry to adjust'. First, it had to control public sector borrowing so that interest rates could fall. 'The high level of borrowing by government and nationalised industries so far this year has been a major cause of interest rates staying as high as they are.' Secondly, as 'the relentless growth of the public sector [had] put a crushing burden on the private wealth-creating sector', the Government had to 'contain the cost of the public sector', especially its largest component, pay. 'As well as being important in its own right', Mrs Thatcher explained, 'this will make it easier for the private sector to settle at realistic levels.'

'When we came to office', she said, 'we found that those who worked in the public services felt that they had had a raw deal from the effect of successive incomes policies. The pay awards made in the last 18 months have, I believe, put that right, and are an earnest of this Government's regard for those who work in the public services. Public service employees have had increases substantially in excess of the private sector.'

It was against this background and the difficulties that industry was experiencing, the Prime Minister continued, that the Government had to consider how much to provide for pay in its rate support grant (see footnote p 324) to local authorities in 1981-82. 'We decided that a 6 per cent increase was all that could be afforded at the present time.'[1] This was more than many workers in the private sector would receive, Mrs Thatcher commented. Some in industry would get nothing at all while some were on short time and had already taken a fall in pay. The distribution of the extra 6 per cent was for the local authorities to decide; 'our job in government is to decide how much those outside the public service can afford to pay for those in the public service'.

This was not, the Prime Minister stressed, an incomes policy 'unless an incomes policy is a policy for living within the nation's income . . . . We are taking the same kind of decision as has to be taken by any responsible employer in private industry.'

Mrs Thatcher went on to warn that 'after two years in which real earnings have gone up sharply while output has actually dropped, we now have no alternative but to accept a reduction in the country's standard of living if investment and employment are to recover'.

The City could help the adjustment in industry 'by showing confidence in basically sound established companies – confidence that they will see their way through the current recession and, in the true tradition of the City which helped generations of merchant adventurers in the past, by seeing that finance is available today for the new firms which will have to fill the gap left by our declining industries'. The Prime Minister expressed the hope that those who gained from high interest rates would 'use their fortuitously high profits for this purpose, and take care to avoid leaving those who work in industry with the feeling that those who work in the financial institutions are benefiting from their misfortune. I believe that we are entitled to look to the City for that kind of leadership.'

This was the sixth squeeze since the war, Mrs Thatcher recalled. Previously, when each one had come to an end, there had been a return to old habits so that, 'from one cycle to the next, inflation and unemployment and interest rates grow inexorably. The change of attitude which we are seeing now must outlast the circumstances of today.' When expansion came it would be just as important to match pay to productivity as it was during the current recession. She called for a continuation of 'the new leadership being shown by management [and] the new realism being shown by workforces'.

The Prime Minister ended her speech by pointing out that, if the Government did not care about the future of Britain it could make itself much more popular in the short run. However, 'it is because we do care that we pursue our policies, and we refuse to reflate the economy to give some temporary relief. The worst betrayal the British people could suffer at the hands of this Government would be for us to seek a little more popularity now by sacrificing all hope of future stability and prosperity. That is not our way.

'The prize of long-term success is within our reach. This Government will continue to pursue policies which will bring it within our grasp.'

[1]The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Mr John Biffen, in a written answer to a parliamentary question on 6 November (*Hansard*, Vol 991, No 240, written answers, col 656) said that government policy was that 'pay increases should be negotiated within the framework of what the country can afford'. Accordingly, the 1981-82 cash limit on rate support grant would provide for increases in earnings of 6 per cent for annual settlements in the current pay round. The Prime Minister, in a written answer on 7 November (*Hansard*, Vol 991, No 240, written answers, cols 671-2), said that, with regard to cash limits on public sector pay not covered by rate support grant, 'pay will be dealt with broadly within the same financial disciplines'. On 20 October the Lord President of the Council, Lord Soames, said in the House of Lords (*Hansard, (HL)*, Vol 413, No 192, col 1632) that in 1981 the cash limit (as opposed to the traditional method, pay research) would be the main determinant of the pay settlement for the Civil Service.

British Construction Overseas

British firms associated with the construction industry earned some £2,740 million overseas in the financial year 1979-80. This was a slightly higher figure than in 1978-79, at current prices. Consulting engineers, architects and surveyors contributed £470 million and export sales of construction materials, plant and machinery, £2,030 million. The balance

came from the overseas earnings of British contractors (£200 million) and from funds remitted by their overseas subsidiaries (£40 million).

BUILDING AND CIVIL ENGINEERING

British contractors won new overseas construction contracts in 1979-80 in 80 countries to the value of £1,302 million (see table), very nearly the same figure as in the previous year, at current prices (see p 385, 1979). The value of work done, however, fell by £359 million in 1979-80, reflecting the fall in new orders between 1977-78 and 1978-79. Work in hand at the end of March 1980 was valued at £1,547 million compared with work in hand of £1,633 million a year earlier.

The Middle East continued to be the main market for British contractors, accounting for about half (by value) of all new contracts won. The United Arab Emirates was once again the leading source of new contracts and there was growth in orders from Saudi Arabia and Egypt. There was also a significant rise – nearly threefold, at current prices – in the value of new contracts obtained in the Americas. In Europe and Oceania, however, new orders contracted in value.

The top 20 firms again won more than 90 per cent of the value of British contractors' new orders. Nevertheless no fewer than 19 of the firms obtaining new orders were reporting overseas contracts for the first time.

Details of some major contracts are listed below. They are taken from an article on overseas construction earnings in *British business* for 24 October.

The Middle East

Bernard Sunley and Sons has been awarded a £10 million contract to build the Arab Monetary Fund headquarters in Abu Dhabi. The building will be 19 storeys high and constructed of reinforced concrete.

Contracts to the value of £4·8 million were awarded to Al Naboodah Laing, an associate company of the John Laing group, to build houses in the eastern province of Abu Dhabi. The company has also been awarded contracts by Abu Dhabi Gas Industries for the construction of steel-framed maintenance buildings.

The Public Works Department of Abu Dhabi has awarded a contract valued at about £14 million to Al Wimpey Roads and Construction (Abu Dhabi), a subsidiary of the Wimpey Group, to convert the 106-km (66-mile) road between Al Mafraq and Tarif into a dual carriageway.

A major sub-contract was signed between Cable and Wireless, the world-wide telecommunications group, and Taylor Woodrow International for the construction of telecommunications buildings and associated civil engineering work in Saudi Arabia. The sub-contract forms a substantial part of a contract with the Saudi Ministry of Defence, for the first part of which (a temporary training school) Taylor Woodrow was also the successful subcontractor. Also in Saudi Arabia, Laing Wimpey Alireza has been awarded a contract worth £8·5 million to build a 14-storey trade centre for Haji Mussein Alireza and Company in the commercial centre of Jeddah. The contract was obtained despite strong international competition, following submission of the lowest bid. Design development and working drawings for the project were undertaken by John Laing Design Associates.

America

A $53 million management contract has been awarded to Bovis Gammon (a company formed by Bovis International and Gammon Properties of Hong Kong) for the first two phases of the $250 million Hong Kong/United States Asian Trade Centre in Oakland, California. The Centre will be a retailing, hotel, office and residential complex.

In Colombia, Stirling International Civil Engineering has won, in association with a local firm, a contract of £35 million to £40 million for the reconstruction of a large part of the Bogotá to Medellin highway. The project includes a major 1·4-km (0·9-mile) bridge across the Madalena river and 36 minor bridges.

Construction Work Overseas
Years ended 31 March

£ million

Area	Value of new contracts obtained		Value of work done		Value of work outstanding	
	1979*	1980†	1979*	1980†	1979*	1980†
Europe	113	103	105	118	197	190
of which European Community	38	21	15	35	36	28
Asia	757	601	882	659	830	740
Africa	263	270	450	275	366	302
America	91	270	117	148	83	194
Oceania	81	58	97	92	157	121
World Total	1,305	1,302	1,651	1,292	1,633	1,547
of which Middle East	662	625	844	667	814	738

*Revised
†Provisional

George Wimpey (Caribbean) was awarded a contract valued at over £1·4 million for the construction of a shopping development in Conva, Trinidad, with a total floor area of 7,000 square metres (69,000 square feet).

Rest of the World

In Banjul, capital of The Gambia, Balfour Beatty was awarded a contract valued at $12·3 million to extend and modernise a hotel. The contract covers the design, all goods and services, construction and commissioning.

Laing Construction, the Nigerian subsidiary of John Laing International, has been awarded a £4·2 million contract to construct support buildings for Mongonu Barracks close to Lake Chad.

The Malaysian Government's public works department has awarded Taylor Woodrow International a £2·8 million contract for the resurfacing of about 80 km (50 miles) of the federal highway in the state of Johore which links Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

THE CONSULTING PROFESSIONS

British consulting engineers, architects and surveyors increased their contribution to Britain's overseas earnings in 1979 despite difficult world conditions. The three professional associations concerned reported on British design work on overseas projects in an article in *British business* for 22 August.

Consulting Engineers

Members of Britain's Association of Consulting Engineers (ACE) were responsible for the design and supervision of overseas projects worth £36,000 million during 1979, slightly less than in the previous year (see p 387, 1979). The net contribution to Britain's invisible earnings was approximately £400 million. Three ACE members won the Queen's award for export achievement (see pp 164–5). Some of the projects in hand are described below.

The first main stage of the Hong Kong mass transit railway was completed during the year (see also p 387, 1979). Plans for the project formulated by Freeman Fox and Partners (supported by other British design consultants) were accepted by the Hong Kong Government who asked the consultants to proceed with their design and called for international tenders on a multi-contract basis. Construction began in 1975 and was completed not only without undue disruption to an already overcrowded transport system but on schedule and at the forecast budget. The service is expected to pay its way and, after an extension due to be completed in 1983, will carry 1·8 million passengers daily over a system 26·6 km (16·5 miles) long.

A £120 million scheme to complement Hong Kong's mass transit railway, comprising a combined system of road and rail bridges was given approval earlier in 1980 and is now being jointly designed by Mott, Hay and Anderson, L. G. Mouchel and Partners, and Harris and Sutherland. One of the bridges, linking the heights between Lantau Island and the mainland, will be the second largest single span in the world.

Large-scale commuter transport schemes in which British consulting engineers are involved, other than in Hong Kong, include those in Antwerp, Brussels, Helsinki, Atlanta, Caracas, Buffalo, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto and Melbourne, all of which involve complex tunnelling. The total current capital value of railway projects amounts to £2,123 million. The leading British firms are Mott, Hay and Anderson; Sir William Halcrow; Henderson Hughes and Busby; Ove Arup; Freeman Fox and Partners; Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick; Kennedy and Donkin; and Charles Haswell and Partners.

In Sri Lanka, the Victoria dam, currently under construction, with Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners as the leading consultants, forms part of a very large scale irrigation and power generation scheme centred on the country's largest river, the Mahaveli Ganga. Numerous countries and funding agencies are participating, and the Victoria dam project is largely financed by Britain's contribution. Support consultancy is being provided by Preece Cardew and Rider, who are responsible for the electrical and mechanical design.

Other British consultants engaged in hydroelectric schemes include Watermeyer Legge Piesold and Uhlmann; Merz and McLellan; and Kennedy and Donkin. Projects under way in South America, Canada, Africa, Iran and Australia were valued at some £667 million in 1979.

Later in 1980 a multi-disciplinary project centred on a large-scale steelworks at Al Hadjar, Algeria, will be completed for an estimated cost of £1,000 million. W. S. Atkins and Partners have been the consultants responsible for the entire project, which incorporates port installations, raw material handling facilities, furnaces, extensions to a power station, distribution of electricity, provision of marshalling yards and electrification of the link to the national railway system.

Architects

Members of the Royal Institute of British Architects continue to be in demand for consultancy work around the world.

In the Middle East, British architects have been involved in numerous projects, including the Al Khashoggi building, a housing development and a new headquarters and laboratories for the Grains and Silos Organisation of the Ministry of Commerce, all in Riyadh (Abbey and Hanson Rowe), part of the new university north of Riyadh, and a residence for a member of the royal family (Gollins Melvin Ward Partnership), the stock exchange building in Kuwait (John S. Bonnington Partnership), the urban structure plan for the new city of Subiya in Kuwait (Shankland Cox), a 420-bed hotel in Kuwait and a 500-bed hotel in Jeddah (Morrison Design Partnership), the new Abu Dhabi national assembly hall (John Brunton and Partners, whose design for the hall was chosen against international competition), a new sewerage scheme (Dalgliesh and Partners) in Abu Dhabi, and the Gulf Hotel in Bahrain and the Cairo Plaza with twin 36-storey towers (Michael Lyell Associates). In Tripoli, Libya, the Mathews Ryan Part-

nership has designed a striking zoological and botanical gardens, pleasure and sports project, and the Gollins Melvin Ward Partnership has designed a National Posts and Telecommunications Institute.

In Asia, projects include the updating of the Greater Jakarta metropolitan plan (Clifford Culpin and Partners), the Castle Peak power station in Hong Kong and the terminal and ancillary buildings for Kota Kinabalu airport in Malaysia (Robert Mathew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners), and the 54-storey Banking Berhad headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, the highest building in the region (Sheppard Robson Architects).

In Africa, John R. Harris Architects have been responsible for a nearly completed 500-bed teaching hospital in north-eastern Nigeria. Sheppard Robson Architects have prepared schemes for a trade and exhibition centre in Ibadan, also in Nigeria, and Norman Dawbarn have handed over the college of National Education at Monduli to the Tanzanian Ministry of Education.

Projects in North America have included plans for medical centres in Manitoba and Alberta (Brewer, Smith and Brewer, Maxwell), and a holiday village project in Arizona (Dalgliesh and Partners). In Europe, British architects have been responsible for a study for the town centre of the new town of St Quentin-en-Yvelines near Versailles (Ardin and Brookes), a large mixed development in Hanover, comprising shops, restaurants, offices and banking accommodation (W. H. Saunders and Son) and have participated in designing the 43-storey LOT (Polish Airlines) terminal complex due to be completed in 1980.

Surveyors

Chartered land and quantity surveyors are mainly responsible for British overseas consultancy surveying activities. Land surveyors have recently undertaken aerial photography in connection with mapping for Guyana, Jamaica, Liberia, Tanzania, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Yemen. Mapping has also been carried out in Cyprus, Malawi and Bahrain, and the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs commissioned a British firm to take aerial photographs and produce imagery showing sources of heat loss, on land and in water, in the industrial area of Utrecht.

Offshore projects have ranged from surveys of supertanker channels in the Gulf and of harbour approaches in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Papua New Guinea, to the establishment of a radio positioning system for seismic monitoring on the Yellow Sea coast of the People's Republic of China. Other radio positioning systems have been provided over the South China Sea, the Bay of Biscay, Britain's western approaches, and the whole of the North Sea. The international oil industry continues to generate demand for land surveying services in connection with position surveys for exploratory drilling rigs and for permanent offshore structures.

Chartered quantity surveyors are also involved in the development of offshore oil fields, providing cost consultancy services on modules for oil rigs, the construction and refurbishment of North Sea oil platforms and on oil and natural gas processing plants in the Middle East. Contracts have also been won on a variety of other construction projects in the Middle East, such as the new international airport at Al Ain in Abu Dhabi, a new institute of technology in the Lebanon, and the first phase of a new hospital in Dubai. The development of sport, leisure and tourist complexes in the Middle East has also provided a number of opportunities for surveyors. Commercial developments, particularly bank headquarters in, for example, Bahrain, Qatar, Baghdad and Cairo, have also provided quantity surveying contracts. In Africa, cost consultancy services have been provided for the new international airport under construction at Lilongwe, Malawi, a multi-million pound cement works in northern Nigeria, and for new townships in Gabon and the trans-Gabon railway. In Asia, chartered quantity surveyors have been active in Singapore (a £17 million pharmaceutical factory), Malaysia (the Kota Kinabalu airport) and Hong Kong. In Europe, quantity surveying involvement has been well maintained with projects including factory and high-quality office developments in France and Belgium and hotel projects in a number of countries.

Property management and letting services have provided contracts throughout the world for British chartered surveyors.

Shorter Notes

BRITISH SHIPBUILDERS

A re-organisation of the management structure of British Shipbuilders (BS), with the objectives of improving the accountability and profit-consciousness of local management and raising productivity, was announced by the chairman, Mr Robert Atkinson, on 8 October. The changes follow a detailed review of BS's operations by Mr Atkinson since he took office in July (see p 277) and result in the creation of five divisions, covering merchant shipbuilding, warshipbuilding, ship repair, marine engineering, and offshore activities. As part of the changes, BS offshore activities – which include the Scott Lithgow yard at Greenock (Scotland) and Vickers Offshore at Barrow-in-Furness (Lancashire) – are to be strengthened considerably and placed under a new divisional chief executive with North Sea oilfield experience; Mr Atkinson said that BS needed to be seen to be more committed to offshore technology. Although the headquarters office will retain centralised financial control, each division will have its own financial controller in order to bring tighter financial control at the local level.

BRITISH NATIONAL OIL CORPORATION

More details of the arrangements to offer the public an opportunity to share in the benefits of Britain's oil wealth, including a new revenue bond scheme related to the performance of the British

National Oil Corporation (BNOC), were given in the House of Lords by the Minister of State at the Department of Employment, the Earl of Gowrie, on 9 October (*Hansard (HL)*, Vol 413, No 187, written answers, cols 709-10).[1] Lord Gowrie said that the Government would propose to Parliament that forthcoming legislation on the future of the BNOC 'should contain powers to enable the public to have a direct equity stake in the BNOC's North Sea business'. The Government also planned to offer to members of the public who did not normally buy shares an opportunity for a direct stake in the benefits of North Sea oil. This would be achieved through the creation of a revenue bond scheme linked to the BNOC's commercial fortunes and performance. Purchasers of the bonds would be entitled to interest payments linked directly to the revenues from specified BNOC fields; the return would 'thus be dictated by the level of BNOC's oil production and the price of oil'. Savers would be able to buy the bonds in small denominations and to cash them in at any time. The Minister said that this would be 'a further opportunity for the British public on a very wide scale to share in the risks and rewards of their enterprise' and the bonds would provide 'a unique investment medium for the small saver'.

NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY

A British scientist, Dr Frederick Sanger, has been awarded his second Nobel Prize – a distinction he shares with only three other people, one of whom was Marie Curie, the discoverer of radium.

Dr Sanger shares the 1980 prize for chemistry with two United States scientists, Professor Paul Berg and Professor Walter Gilbert, for his work on determining the fundamental chemical sequence of nucleic acids, which form the basis of the genetic material of living organisms. He won his first Nobel Prize in 1958 for discovering the sequence of amino-acids in proteins, in particular, the protein insulin, which is used in the treatment of diabetes.

Dr Sanger has been engaged in biochemical research at Cambridge University since he graduated there in 1939. In 1951 he joined the staff of the Medical Research Council and later became head of the division of protein chemistry in the Council's Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge, where he has remained ever since.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

A single focus for all government work on information technology (see p 296) within the Department of Industry has been provided following a re-allocation of ministerial responsibility. Mr Adam Butler, Minister of State for Industry, will now undertake the previously separate responsibilities for the affairs of British Telecommunications (see p 249), and for computer hardware and software, capital electronics equipment, consumer electronics and office automation.

Mr Butler will be supported by a new Information Technology division which has recently been formed within the Department by bringing together previously separate sections dealing with various aspects of information technology.

[1]The Government's proposals were also outlined in a speech by the Secretary of State for Energy, Mr David Howell, at the Conservative Party Conference in Brighton on the same day.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Examinations for 16- to 18-year-olds

Proposals for the development of new examinations for young people in both schools and colleges of further education are contained in a consultative paper[1] published by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office Education Department. One of the two sets of examinations is designed to be taken by those aged 17 and over and would be vocationally orientated, the other would be to be taken in conjunction with advanced (A) level examinations.

The Government acknowledges that there is a group of young people who should continue in full-time education after 16 but whose examination needs are at present not satisfactorily met. This group cannot be defined with great precision but it covers young people of broadly average ability with modest examination achievements at the age of 16 and over, who intend to enter employment at 17 and over, and who do not wish to take or re-take existing school-based examinations. The Government considers that courses and examinations for this group should concentrate on assisting the transition from school to work and should be vocationally orientated. The Government also makes suggestions for an intermediate (I) level examination to broaden the scope of the sixth form curriculum; many pupils who specialise in science subjects undertake no further studies in, for example, languages, and those who specialise in arts subjects engage in no further studies in mathematics, science or technology. The I-level subjects would take approximately half the study time of an A-level to complete.

The proposals contained in the consultative paper follow the Government's consideration of the study group reports *Proposals for a Certificate of Extended Education* (see p 40) and *A Basis for Choice* published in June 1979 by the Further Education Review and Development Unit. Proposals for a new intermediate level examination are in response to suggestions made by the Schools Council in March 1980.

[1]*Examinations 16-18: a consultative paper.* Available from the Department of Education and Science, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH.

Shorter Notes

BUILDINGS OF ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Michael Heseltine, has set out the Government's attitude towards the 'listing' of buildings of architectural or historic interest. (Buildings which are so listed cannot be demolished or substantially altered without official permission.) Addressing a meeting on 14 October of the Victorian Society (which aims to foster an interest in nineteenth-century architecture and design), Mr Heseltine said that the most important problem was to decide how many buildings from the past should be preserved. The system of listing was 'a way of preventing thoughtless destruction'; it was not a commitment to permanent preservation, but every effort should be made to find a way of preserving a listed building.

Certain exceptional buildings, the Secretary of State went on, were worth saving even at substantial public cost, but most buildings had to have an economic use. The main role of central and local government must be to provide a positive climate by encouragement and by flexibility in planning policies. Mr Heseltine said that he would not give consent to the demolition of a listed building unless every other avenue had been explored, in particular offering the building for sale on the open market. Much had been achieved in the past 20 years in the conservation of buildings, but it was up to the conservationists themselves to devise viable future uses for the buildings which they had helped to preserve. 'Now you must take on an additional job;' he continued, 'you must make people see that in their buildings they have not just an architectural heritage but an invaluable asset, not just a well-scaled Victorian factory, but the makings of an imaginative shopping centre.'

There was also a need, Mr Heseltine said, to consider buildings of the 1920s and 1930s in the continuing revision of the statutory list. The Historic Buildings Council had recommended criteria against which such buildings should be judged, and he accepted these. Twelve of the buildings which the Council had recommended for listing had already been listed; these included the Battersea Power Station in London and the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon.

DOCUMENTATION

Government and Administration

The British Parliament. COI, No 56/RP/80.

H-Blocks. The Facts. A paper published by the Northern Ireland Office containing an account of the background to the protests in the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland and the Government's attitude to them. Available free from the Northern Ireland Office, Great George Street, London SW1P 3AJ.

External Affairs and Defence

The Madrid CSCE Review Meeting. COI/Factel No 74/80.

Afghanistan: the Soviet invasion and its consequences for British policy. Fifth Report from the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee. HMSO, £9·40. ISBN 0 10 027459 5.

Afghanistan: the Soviet invasion and its consequences for British policy. Observations on the Committee's report by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. Cmnd 8068. HMSO, £1·10. ISBN 0 10 180680 9.

Exchange of Notes between [Britain] and the . . . United States of America concerning the Acquisition of the Trident I Weapons System (see p 233). Cmnd 8070. HMSO, 70p. ISBN 0 10 180700 7.

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United Nations Report. On the Proceedings of the Twenty-fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations [1979–80] and on the Proceedings of the Security Council in 1979. HMSO, £7·50. ISBN 0 11 591684 4.

Economic and Scientific Affairs

The Law Commission (Law Com. No. 104). Insurance Law Non-disclosure and Breach of Warranty. The Law Commission recommends, among other things, changes in the law relating to disclosure in insurance claims. It feels that, although a duty to disclose material facts should remain, the standard of disclosure should be modified so that insurers can repudiate a policy only if the insured has behaved unreasonably. (In a parliamentary reply on 4 November (*Hansard,* Vol 991, No 237, written answers, col 498), Mr Reginald Eyre, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade, said that the Department of Trade was seeking views on the report.) Cmnd 8064. HMSO, £6·20. ISBN 0 10 180640 X.

Northern Ireland Department of Commerce. Insurance Companies General Report for the year ended December 31, 1979 and for the period ended May 31, 1980. HMSO, Belfast, £1·20. ISBN 0 337 06120 3.

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National Water Council. Annual Report and Accounts 1979–80. NWC, 1 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BT. £2. ISBN 0 904561 93 3.

Water in Scotland: A Review. Scottish Development Department. HMSO, £3·25. ISBN 0 11 491667 5.

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Social and Cultural Affairs

Control of Firearms. COI, No 60/FSB/80.

Prisons in Scotland. Report for 1979. Prepared by the Scottish Home and Health Department. Cmnd 8037. HMSO, £5. ISBN 0 10 180370 2.

The Self-Employed and National Insurance. A Discussion Document. Describes the background to the present national insurance arrangements for self-employed people and discusses ways in which they might be reorganised. Available from Branch CIA, Department of Health and Social Security, State House, High Holborn, London WC1R 4SX. £1·15.

A Fresh Look at Maternity Benefits. A consultative document. Discusses cash provisions for maternity in the light of the Government's proposals to change the system of payment of sickness benefit (see p 144). Available from Department of Health and Social Security, (Branch A3), Room 316, Friars House, 157-168 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8EU. 50p.

Examination 16–18: a consultative paper (see p 330). Presented by the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and Wales. Available free from the Department of Education and Science, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH.

Continuing Education: post-experience vocational provision for those in employment. The paper concentrates on the need for opportunities to be widely available for those already in employment to increase or broaden their skills and knowledge and proposes a course of action to that end. Available free from Publications Despatch Centre, Department of Education and Science, Honeypot Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.

Independent Broadcasting Authority Annual Report and Accounts 1979–80. Available from HMSO, £2. ISBN 0 900485 40 X.

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